

Townsville and District Beekeepers Association (Inc.)

www.beesnorth.com.au

PO Box 1115, Aitkenvale QLD 4814



Newsletter No 6, July 2020

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Next Meeting:

July meeting postponed

Blind Beekeeper Relies on Sound to Keep Her Hives Happy

<https://www.kqed.org/news/1177723/blind-beekeeper-relies-on-the-sound-of-the-swarm-to-keep-her-hives-happy>

"I can hear how the bees are behaving — if they're agitated, if there are other bees trying to get in the hive, or if it's too crowded or too hot or too cold," said Aerial Gilbert, an avid beekeeper in Petaluma. What you want to hear, she said, is a calm steady buzz. That indicates that everything in the hive is going smoothly. Gilbert tends to three beehives on her back patio.

When Gilbert went blind in 1988, beekeeping was one of the hobbies she figured she'd have to give up. But in the years since, she has found ways to do the things she used to before losing her sight. And that has meant relying a lot more on the power of sound. "When I worked with my bees, the information I was paying attention to was visual,"

Gilbert said. "Now it's the other senses."

Gilbert is in her early 60s, but looks younger. She has a crop of black hair and an athletic frame. She used to be a nurse, and with the decisive yet gentle way she moves her hands, you sense she was good at it.

Gilbert doesn't hesitate to open the hives in her backyard and reach down into the humming mass of thousands of bees. Her fingers softly brush against their bodies, and they don't seem to mind. She calls the bees her "girls."

When Gilbert was 10, a swarm of bees flew into her backyard looking for a new home. Hundreds of thousands of bees coalesced in a big buzzing ball on a tree. And they stayed, humming in a giant mass.

Gilbert's grandfather remembered the name of a local beekeeper and gave him a call. He said he'd be happy to have the bees. Gilbert watched the beekeeper walk calmly over to the giant blob of bees and scoop them up with his bare hands. He carried the swarm back to his car and left. Gilbert was mesmerized.

When Gilbert was a junior in high school, her parents finally capitulated to her demand for her own hive. She ordered her first bees from Sears and Roebuck. "They came in the mail, along with the hive," she said. "The postman was terrified. He got to the door and my mom was there, and he just shoved them in her face and said, 'These your bees, lady?'"

It took a long time for Gilbert to get used to being around bees. "When I first started beekeeping I was afraid of them," Gilbert said. She would gear up in a white suit with big thick gloves. "There's so much visual information you get by looking at the honeycomb and the brood nest," Gilbert said. "I didn't think I could be a good beekeeper without being able to see."

Vision Lost in an Instant

Gilbert lost her vision in an instant. After working the night shift at Marin General Hospital in 1988, she stopped at a pharmacy to buy some eye drops. They had been tampered with, filled with drain cleaner.

"I felt sorry for myself. I was afraid of everything. I kind of closed myself down to 'you might as well be dead,'" she said. "I didn't think I could do anything." It was a long process of healing and realizing she wouldn't get her vision back, not even some of it.

"I ... woke up one day and started projecting out what my life would be like because going in the direction I was going wasn't working," Gilbert said. "I had always been very active. Now I was going to have a really boring life if I didn't do something to change this."

There isn't much information about the tampering. Gilbert settled with the company that made the eye drops and, as part of the deal, she isn't supposed to go into detail about it with the media. The [Los Angeles Times](#) ran a short story about the tampering. It says, in part:

The FBI and the federal Food and Drug Administration are probing an incident in which a nurse was blinded by eye drops contaminated with a caustic chemical. "Her left eye looks like it melted and her right eye looks like it's covered with white glue," said Richard Critchlow, an attorney for Gilbert Van Zee Miller, 34, of Fairfax in Marin County.

Gilbert said her marriage ended when she lost her sight, and she couldn't work as a nurse anymore. The hospital gave her a job developing X-rays. She said that was the only place they were comfortable having a blind person work. Gilbert would sit in a small dark room all day, developing film. At first, she was in despair. After six months it reached a breaking point.

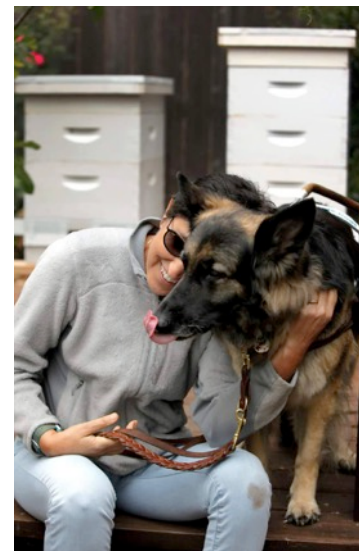
"I made the decision, no more feeling sorry for myself," Gilbert said, "No more hiding, no more being afraid because I am allowing whoever this person was to still hurt me."

She then went to the state school for the blind in Albany, living there for six months and learning braille, how to orient herself and daily living. "I learned a lot of basically the tricks of being blind."

A few years ago, a friend had some hives she needed someone to look after. She asked Gilbert if she could. At first Gilbert hesitated, but she decided to give it a try.



Photos of Aerial Gilbert, an avid beekeeper, in Petaluma on July 7, 2016. By (Crissy Pascual/Argus-Courier Staff)



As soon as the hives arrived, Gilbert was relieved. She was ecstatic to have bees back in her life. And she realized that much of the information about the bees she had gathered before with her eyes, she could now gather with her ears. Whenever Gilbert is out working on the hives, she is listening to them, keeping tabs on how they sound. She also bought some microphones to make recordings inside the hive. Those recordings give her an audio snapshot of the bees' condition and more specific insight into what's happening inside the hives. She can hear the waggle dance, which is the movement bees make to tell others where to find pollen. Not only can Gilbert hear the dance, she has started to notice variations in the sound depending on where the pollen is located. "The dance, it kind of happens in a little circle," Gilbert said. "You'll hear 'bzzz bzzz bzzz,' and it's different patterns depending on how far away the pollen is."

Getting back to beekeeping was a triumph for Gilbert, but that's just one part of her life: She fell in love again and remarried. She has worked at a nonprofit called Guide Dogs for the Blind, was an active volunteer and has traveled extensively. It's been a full life.

Years ago, Gilbert donated one of her kidneys to a friend. The friend recovered, but the surgery didn't go well for Gilbert: She suffered a rare complication that caused her remaining kidney to start failing. Gilbert has managed it for years, but now, she needs someone to donate a kidney to her. Gilbert has had to spend a lot of time at home because of her health, and has been kept from many of the things she loves, like rowing. She has managed to continue taking care of her hives, and after losing bees once in her life, she doesn't want to go without them ever again. Gilbert is not the first blind person to take an interest in bees. Swiss entomologist Francois Huber started losing his sight at age 15. In the 18th century, he made major discoveries about the lives of bees. He proved that bees use their antennae to communicate and that queens mate in the air. And he described how male drone bees — responsible for mating with the queen — were killed at the end of each summer.

And those who are blind aren't the only one listening to bees. Researchers like Tom Seeley at Cornell University are recording them to better understand their behaviour. Seeley wrote a book called "Honeybee Democracy" that's about the decision-making process inside a hive. Seeley said you can listen to an entire democratic process unfolding inside a hive: You can hear the high-pitched buzz of worker bees telling the queen it's time to fly to a new home. There are short, high-pitched bursts when a bee disagrees with some decision inside a hive and wants to vote against doing it. And you can hear the waggle dance that Gilbert has recorded. Gilbert's life is now filled with the beauty and intricacy of all these sounds.

Comment from The Ed I included the entire article on this brave beekeeper just to remind us all that our problems and struggles with COVID-19 isolation might just pale into insignificance compared to some other people. How much attention to you pay to your bees?, can you tell how they are going just on sound alone?

Product Review 1 – Hive feeders (Pt 2)

The Editor is kicking off a new section detailing some of the old, some of the new, and especially some of the weird and wacky tricks and inventions for beekeeping. Please send me your photos and stories of experiences with gadgets or gimmicks to share with the Club (editor@beesnorth.com.au). Last month I reviewed the commercially available Ecrotek hive top feeder (see right). Now our IT guru Ray Berkelmans, down on the Gold Coast, has built his own hive top feeder and here is his story:



Following on from last month's great review of the Hive Doctor by Ecrotek, NZ (thank you Ed!), I thought I'd share my story on hive feeders. First up, let me say that keeping bees on the Gold Coast is substantially more challenging than it was for me in Townsville. It is only a few degrees cooler down this way, but the seasonality in the bees is quite a bit more pronounced. The bees definitely have a big slow-down period in autumn and winter. With little on offer in the way of food during this time, my hives go backwards at a good rate unless I step in and help them. This is more than I remember doing in Townsville where the bees mostly seemed to hold their own through winter.

My first winter intervention was a few years ago when I deployed external feeders. These were the cheap nozzles with plastic channel that you screw onto a plastic bottle with sugar syrup and tip upside down and shove in the front entrance of the hive. For a week or two, everything went fine, but then one day there was a great commotion in front of one of my hives. There was warfare going on with one-on-one combat between bees! On closer inspection, I noticed that many of the bees had distinctly darker 'bums' than my own bees – these were foreigners! There was robbing going on! Basically my sugar syrup was attracting bees from all around and once at my place they were trying to infiltrate my weakened hives. Not the result I was hoping for! So, out with the external sugar feeders!

Next I bought three of the NZ Hive Doctor feeders, the same ones reviewed last month. They sit between the top super and the lid and effectively make the sugar syrup available only to the hive inhabitants - a much, much better idea! As Lindsay mentioned, they hold a massive amount of liquid (12!!) so in theory you could fill-'er-up and leave them alone for weeks! My main gripes with them are that unless you are very careful to seat all the plastic bits down in their place, it is possible for bees to find their way into the feeder and you end up with a heap of dead bees up there. That happened to me twice. The other thing is that the bottom of the feeder sits flat on the top of the super with no space to spare. So, if you have an oil trap, Apithor trap, or burr comb mat in the top super, these need to come out. Also, if you need to feed a pollen paddy, as you inevitably would if the going is tough for bees (they need protein as well as carbs!), there is no room to place it on top of the frames. Instead, you have to take a frame out to fit the pollen in.



Enter my DIY Doctor! It is based on the same idea as the NZ version and consists of an upside down lid with three 25mm tubes (electrical conduit) stuck down over slightly-smaller sized holes. Food-grade silicon sealant (ahum...!) stops the syrup from going down the holes. Bees climb up the inside of the tubes and down the outside to access the syrup, but are prevented from getting out by a small cover. These covers are made of tube-stock pots, cut down to suit. A small patch of fly screen glued into the base of the pots prevents the bees from getting out the holes in the bottom. Three feeding points are placed all at one end instead of spread out, because, well, our hives are all leaning forward a bit aren't they? There is no point in having them in each corner is there? It doesn't hold as much liquid as the NZ version - about 2 litres - which is enough for a weeks-worth at least. After I took these photos, I added a 20mm thick shim to the bottom of the feeder, just to give enough space for the usual paraphernalia I keep on top of my frames AND leave enough room for a pollen paddy. Beauty, works a treat!

The (almost) finished product. It's just missing the 20mm shim on the bottom to give better clearance above the top super. The base is a piece of aluminium sheet, but I guess with good prep and paint, you could use ply?

Cheers
Ray Berkelmans on the very hungry Gold Coast.

Product Review 2– Bees wax Ear Candles

The Ed must have been in isolation too long and gone COVID mad, looks like too much time to Google for bee stories.

Blocked ears are a common problem, and clearing them with various products and methods, like ear buds, finger nails, bobby pins, alcohol wash, syringes with warm salty water etc etc – these can all be found on the internet. My doctor reckons his extra business from folks getting problems from poking ear buds into their ears has funded his kids through school!!! Maybe an exaggeration..... anyway, I saw these and thankfully didn't try them out. By the way, the claim that these work because there is all that black gooey stuff at the bottom of the candle is apparently just the black burnt paper and wax from inside the candle, and not your ear wax that has somehow been mysteriously sucked up by the burning candle. See pics on right and below.

<https://www.healthline.com/health/cosmetic-safety/ear-candling>

Here are some important things to consider:

BEES WAX MELTS AT 62-64 DEG C, did you really think your ear drum and canal would like to have that dripping on them?

DANGERS: burns, perforated eardrums, ear canal blockages that required surgery

Ear candling increases the risk of these injuries: burns to the face, outer ear, eardrum, and inner ear, burns resulting from starting a fire, candle wax falling into the ear and causing a plug or inner ear damage, damage to the eardrum, hearing loss.

Still interested? I have a free packet just for you.

The Ed



Product Review 3 – Lavender stalk pellets for bee smokers

There's more than one way to skin a cat, so the old saying goes, and Club members know that there is more than one way to produce smoke in in your smoker – for example, you could use dried lavender stalks.

Many suggested uses of lavender stalks appear on the Pinterest web site:

<https://www.pinterest.com.au/pin/229191068508123551/>

Some uses are listed as e.g. in floral wreaths, to remove doggy smell from the carpet, as firestarters, to make tea infusions, as a dyeing agent, and so on. Two uses not listed in there are as a bee pacifier in sugar syrup when working a bee hive, the other one is for fuel in your bee smoker. Recently, The Club Shop was offering free trial samples of what looked like pelleted fish food (see pic on right), so I decided to be the guinea pig and try them out.

What is it ?

Dried pelleted waste stalks from lavender bushes that have been harvested for perfume manufacture and oil extraction. Bees Beehive Supplies sell these for \$25/ 5 kg bag, see : <https://www.becsbeehive.com.au/products/lavender-smoker-fuel-pallets-1kg>

“Handy smoker fuel that works just like incense and smoulders producing nice cool smoke. You do need a hot base working in your smoker before you can add 1/4-1/2 cup at a time. Made from the bi-product of lavender plants when extracting the lavender oil. This stuff is really popular in all of Europe. Try it for yourself.” Easy peasy, I thought.

What do they do?

Just like the blurb says, you chuck them in your smoker after you have a hot base of embers going. They ignite fairly easily, stay alight quite well, and produce clouds of white smoke. Not sure if the bees were drifting off to blissed-out a Zen La-la land, as a few became curious and came over to me for closer inspection.

Are they worth it?

For 5 kg of dried pelleted plant products for \$25 that produce heaps of smoke, I think they are OK. Personally, I found the smell pretty obnoxious, a bit like the Hotel Allen carpet after a Cowboys “at home” game when someone handed out cheap cigars after a big win.

Caution: When puffing smoke downwards, which I do into the brood box while doing inspections, you will need to be **VERY, VERY** careful not to empty a tray full of burning hot embers smack bang into the queen's royal chamber – very easy to do with your first use of these hot pellets – that won't be happening again, but take care as these embers are loose and will roll out of an up-ended smoker and this could be a fire hazard, apart from burning a hole in the brood chamber wax. Maybe a wire gauze top layer in your smoker could be used to prevent them rolling out??

The Ed



Bananas and bees – AHB?????

Fiona Cassimatis sent in this pic of a bee swarm in a banana bunch near Tully. I thought bananas were meant to get bees all riled up, but Fiona says “The boys helped a local farmer move this swarm into a box last weekend. It was found under the bunch cover amongst the banana bunch. The bees were so quiet.”

Next month, The Ed will have a review of the wisdom, or not, of placing a banana inside a hive to feed the bees sugar and moisture. Plenty of people reckon it helps clear chalkbrood from a hive, stay tuned.

Ed's Comment: Without a better photo, its hard to confirm, but some of us here at the TDBAI bee club reckon that the location in FNQ, the exposed honeycomb, the place chosen for the swarm to settle, and the size of the swarm strongly suggest that this is an Asian honey bee hive. Better call BQ!!! for a check out.



Vale – Neal Elliman

The news of the sad passing of Neal Elliman on the 29/6/2020 at the age of 79 was received by TDBAI recently. He will be missed by me, and many club members. I was lucky enough during these times of Covid-19 to be 1 of the 2 club members invited to his funeral. Neal has 2 sons and 1 daughter. Jennifer is a professor at JCU in the studies of biology and has given us a talk 2 years ago about her studies of pests & diseases that are harmful to bees. His eldest son Douglas spoke about Neal's life, growing up in Townsville living at Hermit Park, his working life as a diesel mechanic, growing plants and nurturing Bees. He was very involved in the church, leading boy's brigade and helping refugees on their arrival in Townsville. I have had many talks with Neal since I joined the club and I must say I didn't talk as much, but listened to a well-educated man. Neal had given a lot of consideration, study and thought before he spoke and that is why I, and many others enjoyed listening to him. When he spoke at club meetings everyone would listen hard, and to every word he said on the subject of bee keeping, as we all learned from him with his wisdom.

Alan Ziegenfusz

Neal's last days were peaceful with all his family able to spend time with him. Neal was one of the founding members of the TDBAI, and has been a long-standing member and supporter of the club. On behalf of Naomi and myself and Townsville District Beekeepers Association, we send our condolences to Neal's family at this very sad time. Regards

Mick Olsen President

RIP Neal Elliman

Great gizmo for separating supers

Jon McKinstry writes: "this is a neat gizmo that Neil Laffin showed me. I made one and it works well."

During our inspections, some hives stick the boxes together really well. When we have tried to prise them apart, the hive tool often breaks the corners of the boxes and this leaves a weak point for water to enter the wood of the box. We have had a couple of boxes lost to wood rot.

During a visit to our place by Mick Laffin, he showed me a box lifter that 'cracks' the upper level super and this does away with the need to prise that boxes apart with hive tools. It works like this:

The lever action is simple and works well if you have standardised handle locations on all of your supers. Frana and I have now modified our boxes to have standard handles that are set down 35mm from the top of the boxes. All of our supers and brood boxes to be able use this handy gizmo

Simply rest the base of the tool on the top surface of the bottom handle and put the short, wedge end under the bottom surface of the upper box. Push the lever down and the boxes crack with no damage to the corners of the boxes. Brilliant. This tool could be made from timber or steel.

Jon McKinstry



How to repair a broken hearter, I mean spinner

Jon McKinstry showed his ever practical and useful talents in repairing this plastic frame spinner that was returned to the Club Shop and exchanged for a new one. Read below to see how Jon got this one up and spinning.

This plastic spinner has only been used a couple of times and has failed. The cause appears to be that the top bearing has slipped down from its plastic housing.

The failed excluder and the bearing out of its housing are shown at right.

The handle was removed and the top housing unbolted from the extractor. The bearing should be retained in the housing by a pressure fit. Examination of the plastic housing showed a crack on one side of the plastic. This became obvious when the bearing was pushed back into the housing. Repair of the plastic housing was not an option so a collar was made that sat on top of the bevel gear on the main drive shaft. This was made out of an old garden irrigation elbow and a washer. The length was determined at 40mm and the diameter was 10mm. A hole for a split pin was attempted but the shaft was too hard for the domestic drill bits and this repair was abandoned. The collar works just fine.

The collar supporting the bearing, and the final modification shown at right

Why did the plastic bearing housing fail? The thickness of the plastic seemed adequate. Examination of the bearing itself showed that it had seized. The bearing is held in the plastic housing as a pressure fit and it is speculated that the shaft caught on the inner surface of the bearing and tried to turn the bearing in the housing. The handle drives the basket shaft, through the bevel gears at a ratio of 2:1 and so there would be a good deal of pressure on the bearing. It is probable that this was enough to crack the plastic. Definitely not operator error...poor design and material choice.

Both the handle shaft bearing and the top main shaft bearing are being replaced and the collar will prevent the bearing slipping down out of its housing so there should be no more issues with this extractor.

If you have one of these extractors, a simple 40mm long 10mm diameter collar will prevent your extractor from failing.....we hope.

Jon McKinstry



Bees in the News

1. Colony-Level Genetics Predict Gentle Behaviour in Puerto Rican Honey Bees – or - African bees go troppo loco and lose their sting while on holiday in the islands.

African honey bees, which are a separate sub-species of honey bee distinct from EHB, are best known for their strong, vigorous defence of their nests. In the United States, this behaviour has been evident and predominant wherever AHB spread and interbred with EHBs. AHB arrived in Puerto Rico in 1994 aboard ships carrying cargo like oil pipes from South America, and were no gentler than other AHB. However, within a few years of arrival in Puerto Rico, AHB began to show reduced defence of their nests, and today are about on par with EHB in this trait. Researchers suspect several factors could have contributed to this process all related to the challenges of surviving in a remote oceanic island with a high density of human population. The process may have also been abetted by major hurricanes such as Irma and Maria, which could have reduced the bees' overall population and genetic diversity.

Puerto Rico's population of African-European hybrid honey bees (AHB) are now famously known for being much gentler than their continental counterparts. Now Agricultural Research Service (ARS) scientists and their colleagues have found that this reduced defending of the nest is determined by colony-level genetics as opposed to individual bee's DNA (www.pnas.org/cgi/doi/10.1073/pnas.1922927117).

2. Mysterious ancient rock art may have been made with beeswax.

<https://www.sciencemag.org/news/2020/05/mysterious-ancient-rock-art-may-have-been-made-beeswax>

This 500-year-old rock art is among the rarest in the world. Found at a site called Yilbilinji near northern Australia's Gulf of Carpentaria—and depicting a humanlike figure holding a boomerang (right), surrounded by more boomerangs—it's a type of stenciling that involved creating miniature outlines of humans, tools, and other shapes. Similar, much older mini stencils have been found elsewhere in Australia and around the world. Now, scientists think they know how ancient people made them.

Australia's Aboriginal populations have been creating rock art for **at least 44,000 years**. Typically when stenciling, the artist held their hand or other object up to the rock and sprayed pigmented liquid onto it, leaving behind a life-size negative on the wall. But the red-rock overhang at Yilbilinji features much smaller figures: 17 minihumans, boomerangs, and geometric patterns—all too tiny to have been modeled after a painter's hand or a real object. One of the new study's co-authors remembered seeing Aboriginal people using beeswax as a kind of clay for making children's toys resembling cattle and horses. Might the ancient rock artists have used beeswax to form stencils?



Working with representatives of the local Indigenous Marra people, the researchers attempted to replicate the ancient art using only materials native to the region. By heating and molding beeswax, sticking it to the rock, and spraying it with a white-pigment paint, **they managed to produce rock art exceptionally similar to the originals** found at Yilbilinji, they report today in *Antiquity*. The miniature art may have served a spiritual or ritualistic purpose, the researchers note. Or, they suggest, because many of these stencils are positioned relatively low on the rocky overhang, it may have just been child's play, the ancient equivalent to children scribbling on the walls.

Archaeology, doi:10.1126/science.abc9601

Shop etiquette – in this Covid-19 era, please consider the welfare of all members

Email orders will be serviced – but walk in orders will not be completed.

Pre-order by email to shop@beesnorth.com.au; please do not send your order to info@beesnorth.com.au

Wait till after 9:00am to come to the shop; park outside in Rendle St, do not come in to the Shop

Ed's comment: Dear Club members who utilize the fantastic opportunity that our volunteer shopkeepers provide. If we do not wish to see this service reduced or limited we need to show a lot more consideration for those people providing this service. If we burn them out, we might not have this excellent service and convenience. If we do not comply with isolating guidelines, we may not be able to continue.

For your consideration, I outline some current COVID -19

Golden Rules for the Club Shop:

Please:

1. Order **before** the opening day by email: shop@beesnorth.com.au
2. Arrive at the Shop **after** 9:00 am
3. Phone on your arrival, wait for the go ahead to drive to the shop door – one order at a time.
4. Your order will placed in your vehicle – do not get out of the car.
5. Depart straight away to allow others to do their pick up – do not stop at the Shop to chat about bees
6. Non-emailed orders may not get any attention if the Shop is too busy.
7. Do not panic – wash your hands, don't touch your face.
8. We do not sell toilet paper (Reward for the brave person who wears this dress in public – see photo on right)



News from the library

Next meeting, whenever that may be, come and check out our library collection, have a browse and borrow a book, video or magazine.

You can see what's available by looking at our new fancy website library listing with photos at :

<http://beesnorth.com.au/pages/Library.htm>

Stay safe everyone, and **PLEASE RETURN THOSE BORROWED BOOKS AND MAGS** (Ed's highlight).

Beryl Smart

Bees on the internet

A roundup of interesting articles on the internet about bees.

- ABA Newsletter: <https://beeaware.org.au/subscribe-to-newsletter/>

TDBAI Club activities

- Beginner Beekeeper Course for Club members is still on hold – date TBC

- President Mick has been pursuing options for a Clubhouse with TCC, and he has some progress that will be outlined soon. Mick has also obtained permission for the Club to do a pre-burn inspection of Council land in order to identify and rescue any native bee hives. Mick is co-ordinating the inspection and liaising with TCC

General Meeting Minutes: No June General Meeting

Minutes from Committee Meeting 20 Jun 2020

Attendees: Beryl, Sonya, Frana, Keith, Ronelle, Michelle, Allan, Lindsay, Paul and Mick

Apologies: Shane Grist

Meeting opened at 11am

Business: Discussion of the flooding at Michael Hooper park.

Photos of park showing flooding at various stages from a local resident.

Flooding normally occurs during club downtime – Dec/Jan.

Issues raised about putting up a fence for beehives as moving water could be an issue.

If putting up a structure, our insurance premiums could rise by 30%.

This was offered to Woodlands Scout Group however they knocked it back.

Discussed pros and cons of the park – pros - we could occupy this space at minimal cost, maintenance of the toilets remain the responsibility of the council and we have structures we can use immediately. Cons – flooding, access during flooding and debt if we were to build a structure.

All committee members have agreed to a trial at Michael Hooper Part subject to costs (rates) and to see if land is fit for club.

Discussion re: retention rate for club members and the following was agreed to:

Buddy system for new members.

Relevant topics to be discussed at meeting aimed at new members loosely based on Cert 3 in Beekeeping.

Having a welcome pack for new members.

Meeting closed at 12.35

Welcome to our New Members

Existing Club Members are encouraged to assist/mentor our Newbees. They have joined the club to learn about bees, so even if you only have limited experience, give them a hand if you can. Invite a Newbee to your hive opening and discuss what's inside the box, let newbies experience hive openings to become more confident, and you will learn more yourself by trying to explain what's going on in there.

Apologies are offered for not including our new members in previous Newsletters, but the Treasurer, Club Shop co-ordinator, membership registrar, enquiries person, queen orderer, nuc organiser, new member enquiries, and public liaison officer are all one person – Frana Mckinstry – and she has been a little busy lately.

Alex Jenkins, Colin Reynolds, Daniel Killoran, David Thomas, Jacob Hart, John Farrell, Joshua Behrendorff
Justin Connaghan-Harris, Luke Miles, Nigel Ellerton, Ron Newitt, Ted Hinton, Tom Giblett, Tony Pollard, Troy Green,
Wayne Penfold, Barbara Griseau, Peter & Margaret Loveridge, Daniel Kelly, Elly Fraser, Jon Millard

Sell/Swap/Buy/Help needed

I will list items for 2 Newsletters only, unless you let me know otherwise. Please drop The Editor editor@beesnorth.com.au a note to indicate whether the items are required to be listed for a longer period.

Subscribe to the Bee Aware e-newsletter and stay up to date

The BeeAware newsletter is an e-newsletter for beekeepers and growers of pollinator-reliant crops, or anyone else simply interested in beekeeping or the pollination of crops. Each newsletter contains the latest in news, research and development, as well as upcoming events relating to honey bee biosecurity and the pollination of horticultural and agricultural crops. Townsville features in Issue 52 due to the latest AHB and Varroa incursion.

<https://beeaware.org.au/subscribe-to-newsletter/>

Annual Membership Fees are due in July/August each year - currently \$30/p.a.

Membership fees can be made electronically to:

Name:- Townsville and District Beekeepers Association BSB:- 633000

Account:- 141466078

Refer :- Please make sure you add your Surname so that your membership can be signed off.

Email contacts for the Office Holders 2019/20

You can use these email contacts for the Office Holders, and hopefully they will have figured out how to access them and will respond ASAP. president@beesnorth.com.au, treasurer@beesnorth.com.au, editor@beesnorth.com.au, shop@beesnorth.com.au, publicityofficer@beesnorth.com.au

And for all web and membership enquiries : info@beesnorth.com.au

TDBA Inc Office Holders for 2019/2020

President: Mick Olsen president@beesnorth.com.au or mick_naomi@bigpond.com

Vice President: Paul Payne trapper4812@gmail.com

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Treasurer: Frana McKinstry: treasurer@beesnorth.com.au or franajon@gmail.com

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Membership: Frana McKinstry franajon@gmail.com or info@beesnorth.com.au

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Librarian: Beryl Smart smartberyl@gmail.com

Equipment Stewards: Frana McKinstry and Alan Ziegenfusz shop@beesnorth.com.au

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Publicity Officer: Sonya Verburgt sonyaverb@optusnet.com.au

Committee: Ronelle Nord Keith Hunter Shane Grist Tom and Joan Ruddell Michelle Hasted Alan Ziegenfusz

Swarm Contact List:

Please advise editor@beesnorth.com.au if you wish to be removed from this list. Contact me with your name, phone number and suburb if you want to be added to the list.

Kelso/Kirwan: Steve and Carla Kersnovske - 0417 344 419 Stephen Laguna - 0439 089 946 Graham Dalby – 0420951929 Adrian Kirby- 0403 443 141 Michael O'Connell- 0402088080

Douglas/ Gulliver: Ben Taylor - 4728 4992/ 0428 186 000 Sonya Verburgt - 04 0853 0991

Alice River/ Bluewater: Sharene Dougall – 0415426903 Ronelle Nord – 0417752622 Duane Saltmer - 0400 339 508 Amanda Woodcock – 0405784083

Magnetic Island: Tito Parigi - 0418 796 951 **Charters Towers:** Mervyn Yule - 0427 124 126

Swarm List Please contact Biosecurity Queensland : 13 25 23 for any swarm or strange bee activity in the Townsville region. For all swarm collections, please collect 300 bees or roughly 10% of brood comb and submit to Biosecurity Queensland for pest and disease monitoring.

New form for "Sugar Shake" results – BQ requesting us to step up on detection tests for Varroa

Biosecurity Queensland would like beekeepers to fill out this new form below when they do self assessments, such as sugar shaker, drone uncapping or alcohol wash. The form can be filled out manually and sent in reply paid, or it can be emailed. Carla K will also be visiting everyone who would like to practise with the different self assessment types.

Varroa Mite Eradication Program

Managed hive test or feral nest/swarm removal form

Please use this form to submit the results of self-assessments and to submit samples from collected feral swarms or nests. Complete the first section and then any other applicable sections. Please use multiple forms if necessary and separate forms for each location tested.

Return forms to, or contact for sample collection – Department of Agriculture and Fisheries: 07 3330 4560

PO Box 1085 Townsville Q 4810 or email varroa@daf.qld.gov.au.

Address of collection location	
Collector	
Collector's phone or email	
HIN	

Alcohol wash/ sugar shake (300 bees per hive recommended. Submit sample if anything suspect seen)

Date tested	Alcohol wash or sugar shake? (AW or SS)	Hive ID and approximate number of bees tested	Anything suspect? (Y or N)	Sample submitted? (Y or N)

Drone uncapping (20 drone pupae per hive recommended. Submit sample if anything suspect seen)

Date tested	Hive ID and approximate number of drone pupae examined	Anything suspect? (Y or N)	Sample submitted? (Y or N)

Feral nest or swarm removed and samples kept for DAF to identify and check for varroa (300 bees and several hundred capped brood cells - especially drone brood - recommended)

Date collected	Bees submitted?	Comb submitted?

DAF use only - Analysis by NVMEP

Case	Sample	Date tested	Tested by
ID result	<i>Apis cerana</i> (AHB)	<i>Apis mellifera</i> (EHB)	Other
Varroa seen			
Recording	Date	By	

Scan to server, email to varroa (cc to manager and SPO), add to VMI2019 (attach scan to result), file hard copy

The Department of Agriculture and Fisheries is collecting the information on this form as a record of surveillance activities conducted under the National Varroa Mite Eradication Program. Summaries of surveillance activities may be provided to the Consultative Committee on Emergency Plant Pests, formed by the Australian Government Department of Agriculture for the purpose of reporting against the Response Plan for the Eradication of *Varroa jacobsoni* from Queensland – 2019 Incident. Any personal information collected will not be disclosed to any other parties unless authorised or required by law.

Club Shop Items - 2020 Price List

These prices are only available to current financial members

Item	Price	Item	Price
Jacket - Cotton	60.00	Eyelets pkt 50g	6.00
Jacket - Ventilated	90.00	Awl (for picking eyelets)	5.00
Full Suit - Cotton	90.00	S/S Wire x 500gm	20.00
Full Suit - ventilated	115.00	Crimping Tool	14.00
Replacement veil for vented suit	25.00	Bucket Bracket	10.00
Cowboy hat with veil	12.00	Bucket Opener	7.00
Veil - cotton	20.00	Queen Catcher (butterfly clip)	3.00
Child's full suit	60.00	Queen Catcher & Marker (tube)	8.00
Gloves - pair	25.00	Frame Gripper	10.00
Veil - Native Bee	3.00	Frame Hanger	20.00
		Bee Feeders	1.00
Super - 10 Frame	28.00	Spring clips, ea	2.00
Super - 8 frame	25.00		
Super - Ideal	25.00	Gate valve - Nuplas	12.00
Super - WSP	25.00	Gate valve - Parker	30.00
Lids (8 or 10 Frame)	27.00	Gate Valve S/S	35.00
Lids (8 or 10 Frame) pre-assembled	35.00	Gate valve O rings - Parker	7.00
Base - Ply (8 or 10 frame)	22.00	Cappings knife, serrated	15.00
Base - Mesh	35.00	Cappings knife, electric	45.00
Mesh sheet (for base construction)	15.00	Comb scratcher	8.00
Lifting Cleats (Handles, pair)	5.00	Strainer	26.00
		Scales	12.00
Nuplas Super 10 Fr	40.00	Extractor - Plastic	140.00
Nuplas Super 8 Fr	40.00		
Nuplas Super - Ideal	35.00	Honey jars 250gm	0.70
Nuplas Lid, 8 or 10 Fr	38.00	Honey jars 500gm square	0.80
Nuplas Base, 8 or 10 Fr	45.00	Honey Jars Squeeze 550g	0.80
Nuplas 10 Fr set: 1 x super, lid & base	120.00	Honey Jars 1 kg	1.00
Nuplas cleats	10.00	Honey Pails - 1 kg	1.20
Nuplas oil tray & frame	28.00	Honey Pails - 1.5kg	1.30
Hive Doctor plastic base	55.00	Honey bottle 2.8kg (2 litre)	0.80
Beetle Buster Base (8 or 10)	100.00	Glass jars 500g	1.00
4 Frame Nuc Box	65.00		
5 Frame Nuc Box	70.00	TRAPS	
Corflute Nuc boxes	28.00	Apithor trap	8.00
		Silver Bullet trap	8.00
Hive tool (S/S)	15.00	Diatomaceous Earth per pack	4.00
Smoker	35.00		
Smoker - Beeco	85.00	BOOKS	
Bee Brush	10.00	Managing AFB	0.00
Emlok - hive clamp	14.00	ABC of Beekeeping in Tropics	25.00
Hive Handle (galvanised)	12.00	Australian Beekeeping Manual	35.00
Queen Excluder - Wire (8 or 10 frame)	22.00	Australian Native Bee Book	25.00
Queen Excluder - Plastic	12.00		
Queen Excluder scraper	10.00	Honey Labels (\$5 for 50) or roll	25.00
		Nutrition panel labels (per roll)	20.00
Frames - Full depth	2.00	Posca Queen marking pen	5.00
Frames - Full depth, prewired	4.00	Warning Sign	10.00
Frames - Ideal	1.50	Bee Poster	20.00
Frames - WSP	1.50	AFB test kit	0.00
Foundation - Plastic	2.10		
Foundation - Wax, per sheet	2.40	Club Polo Shirts	40.00
WSP or Ideal foundation (plastic)	2.00	Club Polo Shirts L/S	45.00
Wax Embedding tool	45.00	Club hats with logo	15.00
Block beeswax, per Kg	22.00		

TDBA Bee Starter Kit - \$160

The Perfect Gift for a budding Beekeeper

Available in Townsville from the Club Shop:

Club Members Price Only! \$160

Hive tool, brush, vented jacket/veil, gloves, and smoker

Plus: The ABC of Beekeeping book

Contact: Club Shop Stewards: Frana M or Alan Z or email:

shop@beesnorth.com.au



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Raw honey, and pollination services. Will help new members get started with bees

Dan Donovan: Ph 0428 218 816

